

THE REFORMER.

Run ye to and fro through the streets of Jerusalem, and see now, and know, and seek in the broad places thereof, if ye can find a man, if there be any that executeth judgment, that seeketh the truth.—*Jeremiah*, v. 1.

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"NATIONAL RELIGION"—*Again.*

[The following extracts from an Address before the *Society of Inquiry respecting Missions*, in the Theological Seminary at Andover, with the accompanying remarks in the *Boston Recorder and Telegraph*, are not unsuitable for an Appendix to the "*Circular*" inserted in our last number.]

[From the *Boston Recorder and Telegraph* of August 26.]

"CONNECTION BETWEEN DOMESTIC MISSIONS AND THE POLITICAL PROSPECTS OF OUR NATION."

"After some preliminary remarks on the present aspect of the political world on our security from foreign invasion, and the dependence of our future destiny on the character of our rising population, the address proceeds—

'1. To suggest some of the principal causes on which the perpetuity of a republican government depends:

'2. To hint at the agency of these causes in making us what we are:

'3. To glance at the prospects of our nation considered as depending on these causes, and draw some inferences respecting domestic missions.' [Under this last head the Address contains the following remarks:]

'In a very extensive portion of our country, not only individual, but public character is in a *forming* state. Not only are individuals and families ready to receive any character which circumstances may impress upon them, but Schools, Academies, Colleges, and Institutions of every kind, public opinion and sentiment, habits, manners, *modes of thinking, living, and acting*, all are waiting to be moulded by the forming hand of the friends of liberty and religion. Such is the infant state of

society, that a man of prudence might very soon impress his individual character on half a state.

'There are populous communities rising up. They need schools established among them, Academies, Colleges, and all those institutions which will contribute to form their social, political and religious character—which will give tone to public sentiment, and establish those principles of human action, from which private happiness and public peace result. But this is what can be effected only by men, who shall go and plant themselves in the midst of these communities for life;—men who shall exert on the moral and intellectual character of those among whom they are placed an extensive, steady and permanent influence.

"*Another difficulty*" [says the *Boston Recorder*, speaking of the difficulties in accomplishing this extensive and permanent influence] "arises from the *want of means* to secure such an influence. Funds more ample and permanent, are necessary—such funds as can be raised only by united effort.

'Besides this,' [continues the Address,] 'when we look at the character of our government, and see that our nation is only one great fraternity, a third *difficulty* arises. The present system is too sectional. Every society has its local boundaries, embracing a state or half a state, or perhaps a county. Hence arise many local prejudices, sectional attachments, and even party feelings, and sectarian views, none of which ought to find a place in a country like ours.

"Some change, therefore, in our plan of domestic missions, the author thinks, is required by the new circum-

stances and wants of our scattered and growing population.

'In the first place, a system is needed which shall have no sectional interests, no local prejudices, no party animosities, no sectarian views; a system which shall look exclusively at no particular section of country, but alike to all that need its help; which shall enlist the North and the South, the East and the West, of our nation in its aid.

'In the second place, a change is needed, which shall remove all difficulty from deficiency of funds; such a change, that the treasuries which now exist, shall become parts of one common treasury, and that treasury the depository of vast resources, which now, for want of confidence, come into none of them.

'Thirdly, a change is needed, that shall secure all the advantages of union in operation, and permanency in effect. We want a system which shall be one; one in purpose, one in action;—a system, aiming not at itinerant missionary labor *alone*, but at planting in every little community that is rising up, men of learning and influence, to impress their own character on those communities, and secure the prevalence of such an order of things, as shall perpetuate in it all the blessings of political, literary and religious education—a system, in short, which shall gather the resources of philanthropy, patriotism and christian sympathy, throughout our country, into one vast reservoir, from which a stream shall flow to Georgia, to Louisiana, to Missouri, and to Maine. We want a society that shall do all this;—a society, in which all who have the spirit of the gospel—all who love their country—all whose bosoms ever glowed with philanthropy—may unite, without one hesitating or discordant feeling. We want a *National Society*. Such a society *will* do all this. And if such a society is to be proposed; if the nobly bold design has been conceived, of thus giving the

blessings and glories of our republic to the last generation that shall stand on these shores of being, we shout success, but not in arms;—let no sect raise its banner—no section stand alone—no party wake to strife—but blow the trumpet in Zion, and ALL SHALL COME!"

[Thus ends the Address in the Andover Seminary, and what we conceive to be a very suitable *Appendix* to the "Circular" in our last number.]

[From the *Gospel Luminary*.]

CHURCH AND STATE.

We confess that in commencing the *Gospel Luminary*, we did not apprehend so much danger from efforts to establish a Church and State religion in our country, as we are at present compelled to. But in viewing the figure cut by various societies established in our country, under the imposing name of "religious," we are irresistably led to apprehend the period not far distant, when open and violent efforts will be made to unite church and state together, even in this country. This object with its various branches, has for years been gradually tending towards its ultimate end. Much has been said about sending missionaries to christianize the heathen; and the educating of young men, to fit them for the ministry. For these objects even millions of dollars have been expended, and what has been accomplished? It is really to be feared, that in many places where such missionaries have been sent, that there is now a less willingness to hear the plain simple gospel, than there was before they obtruded themselves. The reason is obvious; the plan is rotten at the bottom, and is principally based on *money*. Missionary obtruders, would probably be less by fifty *per cent*, was the *root of all evil* withheld from them in that ratio. There are at present too many efforts to support missionary *gentility*; and it is to be feared, that frequently more of the *gentleman* is sent to missionate, than there is of the self-

denying christian. Human embellishments can never constitute a knowledge of the way to everlasting life, nor qualify a man to teach it. Give us poor *fishermen*, or despised *tax-gatherers*; if the Lord sends them, and they have the word of his grace in their souls, they will do more good than all the *dandy-cut* missionaries that could stand between *Dan* and *Beersheba*.

In addition to the present missionating system, a national engine of power has been erected in New-York city, enstamped with the title of "*National Tract Society*" This combination is made up of *Presbyterians*, *Baptists*, *Episcopalians* and *Methodists*, associated together. The plan however appears to have been set on foot by the *Presbyterians*, as an overt advance of theirs towards a national religion. The other orders in their enlistment into this fraternity, appear to have been rather hoodwinked. A circular is now passing thro' different parts of our country, said to be sent out by the *Presbyterians*, praising the liberality of those sects towards each other, in uniting their strength together in the national combination; recommending, forsooth, the establishment of a national creed, and an amalgamation of sentiments. This is at once letting us know what they are about. This circular expresses the desire, to have but one form of religion, which must be national; the ministers of which must be educated and paid by the general government. The clergy are to adopt a "*national costume*," which is to be solemn and imposing; and such as will secure the *sacerdotal character* that *reverence* which is due to it.

Such are the objects had in view by the most leading party in the *National Tract Society*; and such are the plans on foot at the present day, for the establishment of a national religion. We rejoice, however, to learn that some of the other sects are not willing to be thus duped, nor to sacrifice their rights at the shrine of the priestly ambition of the *Presbyterian* clergy. The

Methodists were never fully satisfied with the plan on which the *National Tract Society* was organized, nor were they of uniting with it. The *Baptists* are already jealous of their rights, and have sounded the alarm trumpet. The *Columbian Star* says, "there may be more reason to apprehend a powerful effort at no distant day, to establish a national religion in this country, than we are accustomed to suppose." This is indeed a word in season. Let the public mind be on the alert. Let every editor friendly to civil and religious liberty, openly protest against the unhallowed project. Let the heralds of a free gospel, proclaim the sound of liberty, long and loud. Let the slumbering energies of the church be aroused, never to bow their necks to ecclesiastical bondage. God save the republic of America from religious intolerance, and priestly usurpation!

[From the *Christian Baptist*.]

AN ADDRESS

To the Divines composing the last General Assembly which met in May last in the City of Philadelphia.

Reverend Gentlemen—From the spirit that is breathed, and from the style adopted in all your synodical reports, it is too evident to the discerning part of the community amongst which you live, that you aim at high things, though lower than the skies. You evidently aspire to dominion and rule over the other sectaries in our land; you aim at forming public opinion, and then of wielding its moral force to your own personal aggrandizement. For this purpose you found colleges and attempt the control of all within the sphere of your domination. You cannot think that your fellow citizens are so stupid as not to see through the thin veil which you throw around your schemes. You very well know that learning or knowledge gives power, and that this power can be managed to the interest of those who possess it. You as well know that all the young men

of fortune rise to distinction by means of an academical education, and that before this education can be accomplished your plastic hands, and persuasive tongues must be employed while you control all the fountains of education. It is quite obvious from what you say and from what you do, that you calculate much from a right management of these institutions in gaining the ascendant. You have good lessons and good examples before you to prompt you to this course. You still remember what Roman priests achieved from a monopoly of learning, and that when the clergy of Europe engrossed all its learning they engrossed all authority over the minds, and consciences, and estates of men. You remember that the time once was that a priest must write the last will and testament of all the true sons of the hierarchy, and that often all the devotees had, and always a part must be bequeathed to the church or clergy or to some pious fraud. You are not ignorant of the relation that exists between causes and effects, and that the same causes will always produce the same effects. But, gentlemen, deep and profound as your policy is, there is one circumstance that will blast all your schemes; which will prostrate all your efforts, and react upon your own persons with tremendous influence. Too much light has been diffused. You are not to blame for this. For it was not from you nor owing to your efforts that this light has spread.

[From the *Cayuga Republican*, printed at Auburn, New York.]

ESPIONAGE.

☞ We have seen nothing for some time past, more clearly in proof that the independence of the Press is still cherished in some parts of our country, than the following communication in the Patriot of last week:

"A HINT.

"Those young gentlemen who are in the habit of calling at the houses of well

known and respectable citizens, and (in the absence of the master of the house) abruptly inquiring "have you got a Bible or Testament," and "how many of the family can read," are advised to stay in their chambers, and employ themselves in studying the book they inquire for.

"Every house ought to contain a Bible, and in this place none so poor but that can obtain one.

"The inquiries above alluded to are impertinent, and exhibit either real or hypocritical zeal over much.

"AUBURN."

Things have come to a fine pass indeed in this happy land, if our dwellings are to be rudely broken into by every coxcomb who may take it into his head to examine our libraries, and inquire into the regulation of our domestic concerns. It is surprising that a sensible people will allow themselves so to be imposed upon. The next thing we shall see, will be some self-appointed Inquisitor stalking into our kitchens, with paper and ink-horn, to take an inventory of our pots, kettles, and skimmers! House-wives, "stand to your broomsticks," as Gov. Troup of Georgia says.

☞ If the chap who called at my house the other day, when he had the best reason to suppose me abroad, will call again when I am at home, (as I have no success in trying to discover him,) and thrust his proboscis inside my door, with the above question on the nether end thereof, I promise both it and the wearer, a *suitable* reception; and if the interview does not make an indelible impression upon his memory for years to come—the fault shall be none of mine.—*Verbum sap.*

N. B. My usual dinner hour is a couple of ten minutes past one.

[It appears from the next number of the *Cayuga Republican*, that the "young gentlemen," to whom the foregoing "HINT" was given, were supposed to belong to the Theological Seminary at that place. Whoever they might be, they no doubt expected to signalize themselves as zealous champions in the cause of religion by

officially inquiring of the citizens whether they had "got a Bible or Testament,"—"how many of the family could read," &c. The following is copied from an article in the next number of the Republican.]

☞ NOTICE.—The person residing at the Seminary, who signed his name to a pious and insulting letter, which was sent to this establishment on Friday evening last, in consequence of our having republished a little communication from the Patriot, on a *tender* subject, is informed that he will find our *exclusively* pious reply in the Post-office. He will observe therein, among much other cogent argument, the reasons why we thought proper, much to his alarm, to pronounce the "Patriot," though widely differing from us in politics, an "independent Press."—Whereupon, we trust our office will hereafter be made more and more an exception to the *button-holding* remonstrances, and expostulating visitings of certain persons, to whose *well-known* and *universally granted* faculty of divination, we feel inclined to bow with due humiliation.

These offensive letters had better be discontinued, as we know they can have no other origin than conscious weakness. If not, unwilling as we are to occupy our pages with such disquisitions as they can elicit, we shall find some other medium of inviting combating, answering, and exposing some of their notions; while at the same time it shall be shown that a *barrier does not exist*, (as has been said) in this place, to an "independent Press."

For the Reformer.

[Communicated from Palmyra, N. York.]

"A GENERAL IDEA OF PRIESTCRAFT."

Looking over an old library the other day, I came across a work, entitled, "The Independent Whig, or a Defence of Primitive Christianity, against the exorbitant claims and encroachments of fanatical and dis-

pointed Clergymen,"* originally published in London, and republished in Hartford, (Con.) in 1816; the design of which is precisely what its title imports. On perusing it, I was forcibly struck with an article which it contained under the above head; and, Messrs. Editors, finding some "ideas" and facts very applicable to some men and things in our *land of liberty*, at the present time, I have subjoined the following abstract, with the hope that you will give it a place in your useful paper. The "high jackobite" priests and missionaries, in our country, encouraged by the success which has "crowned their past labours," and by the partial ascendancy they have gained over the credulity of the bigoted, superstitious, and ignorant, are getting quite too brazen-faced and dangerous. It is the duty of every lover of liberty, of every friend to our free institutions, and of every *man*, to put a shoulder to the wheel, to rid our land of such aspiring and intriguing characters.

Speaking of the conduct of the Romish priests, &c. the author says—"They maintain all their pretensions and power by doctrines which are calculated to make the people either wonder or tremble; and when a man has lost his courage and his understanding, you may easily cheat or terrify him into as tractable an animal as the creation affords. The doctrines of purgatory, and of the priest's power to forgive or damn, are alone strong enough to frighten most folks into what liberality and submission the church thinks fit to demand of them. And we all know that she is not over modest upon such occasions." The same principles exactly, though sometimes under differ-

* The Editors of this work were as far removed from Deism as perhaps any men in England. But while they had the most established belief in the truths of Christianity, they considered it to be their privilege and their duty to examine with freedom the claims and pretensions of the clergy;—and few men ever did it with more boldness and effect.—*Ed.*

ent names or professions, prompt our modern Presbyterian clergymen and missionaries, in their endeavors to produce what they call "*convictions*."—The writer proceeds: "Very many of our high jacobite clergy aim at dominion by the same wicked means, and hood-wink and alarm us all they can. They lead us out of the road of reason, and play their engines in the dark; and all the illumination we can get from them is, that we are all in a mist. Without their guidance we go astray, and with it we go blind-fold. All their arguments are fetched from their own authority. Their assertions are no less than rules and laws to us; and where they lead we must follow, though into darkness and servitude. If we grow wilful, and break loose from our orthodox ignorance, we are pursued with hard names and curses. Doubting is infidelity—reason is atheism. What can we do in this case? There is no medium between a block-head and a schismatick: if we follow them blindly, we are the first; the second if we leave them. We want faith if we will not take their word; we want eyes if we do.

"They indeed give a sugar plumb, and refer us to the Bible for proof of all that they say. But, in truth, this privilege, if we examine it, will appear none at all; but, on the contrary, an arrant trick, and gross mockery. For when they have sent us to a text, will they allow us to construe it our own way? No such matter. They have nailed a meaning to it, and will permit it to bear no other. You may read, provided you read with their spectacles; and examine their propositions freely, provided you take them every one for granted. You may exert your reason fully, but be sure let it be to no purpose; and use your understanding independently, under their absolute direction and control. I wonder how these men could ever have the front to accuse the Church of Rome for locking up the Bible in an unknown tongue!

The eternal war which they wage against reason, which they use just as they do scripture, is founded upon good policy; but it is pleasant to observe their manner of attacking it. They reason against reason—use reason against the use of reason, and show, from very good reason that reason is good for nothing. When they think it on their own side, then they apply all its aids to convince or confound those, who dare to think without their concurrence; therefore, in their controversies about religion, they frequently appeal to reason; but we must not accept the appeal, for if our reason be not their reason, it is no reason. They use it, or the appearance of it, against all men; but no man must use it against them. As there is no such thing as arguing and persuading without the assistance of reason, it is a little absurd, if not ungrateful, in these gentlemen to decry it at the same time they are employing it; to turn the batteries of reason against reason, and make itself destroy itself.

"Neither scripture, therefore, nor reason, by these rules signify any thing till the priests have explained them, and made them signify something; and the word of God is not the word of God, till they have declared its sense, and made it so. Thus by the time that scripture and reason have been modelled, and qualified, and cooked up by the high church jacobite clergy, they are neither scripture nor reason; but a perfect French dish, or what the spiritual cooks please; an olio or hodge-podge of nonsense, jargon and authority.

"From all that has been said, the following conclusions may be drawn. Such clergymen as I have been above describing, prove every thing by asserting it, and make any pretence support any claim. They build systems upon pretended facts, and argue from propositions which are either highly improbable, or certainly false. When they cannot convince, they confound

us; when they cannot persuade they terrify. We have but two ways to try the truth of their doctrines, and the validity of their demands, namely, reason and revelation; and they deprive us of both, by making the one dark, the other dangerous.

"What a contempt must this tribe have for mankind!"

And what a striking resemblance there is between the picture of the clergy here drawn, and the modern clergy and missionaries in our own country.

OBSERVER.

American Society for Meliorating the condition of the Jews, and Jewish converts.

It appears there has been quite a "falling out" between the "American Society for Meliorating the Condition of the Jews," and some of the Jewish converts. Both Mr. Simon and Jadownick, (Jewish converts from Germany,) refuse to reside on the farm leased in West-Chester county, N. Y. for the purpose of a Jewish settlement. In their reply to an "official communication" from the Board of Directors containing a copy of the regulations for the settlement, with an invitation for them to settle on the farm, they state, that it had been their object to establish 'a free community and church among themselves, where they might unite in the name of Christ to labour for their support, and worship God according to his revealed will and the dictates of their own consciences.'—They object, therefore, to the appointment of a Chaplain by the Board to have the direction of their spiritual concerns, as they desire to be in "amity with all denominations but *called by none*"—and that their church may not become a "sectarian institution," they would have a "Hebrew Christian," to be chosen by themselves, for their "minister."

In respect to the regulations made by the Board for the temporal concerns of the Institution, they respectfully request the Board to re-consider those

regulations, and to "tell them whether they are not rather the regulations belonging to an Alms-house or Asylum than a free community." "Well educated and enlightened Hebrews," they say, "are not willing to be placed on this footing," and "treated as babes in their nonage," and to "have their earnings, acquired by the sweat of their brow or by the talents and attainments of their brethren, put into the hands of the Board for their disposal, thus leaving themselves dependant upon their discretion for their very clothing."

To be called by no *sectarian name*, but be a "FREE COMMUNITY," can never harmonize with the views of the Board of Directors. They would as soon, in all probability, that the Jews should always remain devoted to Judaism as not to "be called by *THEIR* name, embrace their creed, and belong to their sect."

This American Jews Society seems to be losing the support of some of our most orthodox prints. A writer in a late number of the *Boston Recorder* inquires,

"What has the American Jews Society *done* since its formation? It has been some years in operation,—it has employed agents, who have been as persevering and as faithful as any others—it has appealed to the most sanctified and holy motives that ever warmed the Christian's heart, and has collected thousands and thousands of dollars,—and I ask what has it done? I have heard much talk and seen much written about colonizing European Jews—about purchasing lands on which they may settle—about opening a receptacle for them on these shores—and that a few have crossed the Atlantic; but with all the funds collected, what has been done? The few Jews in this country refuse to occupy the farms which have been hired; [two have at length consented;] nor do I wonder at it much, for I always understood that a Jew would live by *trading* not by *farming*. I wish, Messrs. Editors, that some

one would make out a full view of the receipts and expenditures of the Jews Society from the commencement of its operations, that we may know how much has been contributed, how much has been expended for agencies and in other ways, how much remains in the treasury, and how much has hitherto been done. It is one thing to beg or to give 20,000 dollars for the conversion of the Jews, and quite another thing to use it in a manner calculated to bring them to repentance, and save their souls from death. I find there are many who consider the project of colonizing converted Jews at best an *experiment*—and one too of very doubtful utility.”

It is quite time that the advocates for the numerous schemes and projects of the day, as well as others, should begin to see the evils and abuses practised under the semblance of zeal for God and love to the souls of men. The Christian religion has been outraged and disgraced by the conduct and proceedings of innumerable societies, formed under pretence of converting Jews, Pagans, and Infidels; and unless these associations are speedily brought to an end or conducted under a different principle, and in a better manner, there will be very little true religion left remaining in the world. The injury they have already done to the cause of Christianity is far greater than all that has ever been done by Jews, Pagans, and Infidels, put together.

APPRENTICES BIBLE SOCIETY, TRENTON, N. JERSEY.

[The following communication from Trenton, (N. J.) exhibits facts respecting the transactions of the *Apprentices Auxiliary Bible Society*, in that place, very little to the credit of such institutions. The writer himself has been a member of this Society, is well acquainted with its proceedings, and his responsibility and integrity are such as to entitle his statements to the fullest credit. Bible Societies, rightly engaged in and properly conducted, might be productive of much

good and redound to the interests of christianity; but, managed and carried on as they now are, it would be better to abandon them altogether or adopt a different and less exceptionable course of proceeding with regard to them.]

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For the Reformer.

Mr. Editor.—The opposition to the Reformer is carried to such an extent by many professing christians, that to speak of the statements which it presents to the public, as though we believed a mercenary priesthood were detrimental to the spread of pure religion, is sufficient to be condemned for heresy. But, as one of many evidences, by which the Reformer is defended, the *Apprentices Auxiliary Bible Society* of this place, will show what motives actuate a greater part of those men who are so zealous in raising and managing such institutions. If the position be admitted, that irreligious people are the same with respect to the spread of pure religion in whatever part of the country they are found, whether adults or minors, I trust that a knowledge of the rise and progress of this society will have some effect on the minds of those who have so often condemned a work, the only end of which is to expose the plans that disgrace the christian name. To facts let us appeal.

Sometime about the commencement of the year 1824, some members of a Sunday school, devised a plan to procure Bibles and Testaments for the school under their care. This was to raise a society, bearing the sounding appellation of the “*Apprentices Bible Society*,” and thereby decoy the unwary boy and wring from him his hard earned or ill gotten six-pence monthly. For this purpose it was necessary to get some young person to set it on foot. A young man of talents and influence was found, who lured by the thoughts of being the President, and having a chance of displaying his talents in publick by making speeches, &c. agreed to the plan proposed—projected jointly by priest, politician, and pious ladies.

Through his exertions, a paper was carried round and signed by the young people who could be prevailed on to attend a meeting, for taking the steps preparatory to the organization of the society. By this means a meeting was called, which was led by the young man above mentioned and a student of divinity. A committee was appointed to draft a constitution. The meeting adjourned to meet at such time and place as the committee should appoint. During the interval the constitution was drawn, revised, and corrected; not by the committee appointed, but by a clergyman and some Sunday school teachers, who volunteered to assist the committee and *fix it rightly*. The next thing was to fix the place of meeting. This was the room occupied by the District Court of the United States, and was done for the avowed purpose of exciting the curiosity of the youth, and thus bringing them to the meeting. Some young persons were also sent amongst the boys with certain irresistible arguments to get them to join. The arguments were—"Come, it will be only a fip a month; that will not be much, and then you will get your names up by it." "People will think the Apprentices are getting to be something great," &c. using good reasons for joining more sparingly than oaths. Every thing was fixed for the meeting, with all the nicety and precision of conspirators when they prepare for a rebellion. Officers were appointed to be elected, with due regard to the main object, which was a majority for the priest, or zealous Presbyterians. At length the evening came, the sound of the *State House* bell proclaimed that something was on foot. What? was the inquiry. The Apprentices meet at the *State House*, was answered. This well contrived novelty drew the boys to see what was the commotion. Thus they collected about fifty Apprentices and others. The house was called to order. An older person than an Apprentice took the chair, the one who helped to

form the constitution; one who knew much about such things, and had the part perfect that he was to act. An address was delivered. The officers were next elected; and here was another bait for those who had no desire or expectation of joining. Knowing how their fathers prize the elective privilege, they were cheated by the prospect of enjoying in some degree, the pleasures of this high power. A ballot box was produced, two tickets were formed, and a mimic election took place. The friends of the different candidates ran to and fro bringing all they could to the poll. Laughter, bustle, and confusion reigned, and this in the presence of clergymen too. *The end was obtained, and therefore according to modern doctrine, the means were justifiable.* A resolution was passed that the Board of Directors address the Apprentices of the United States, and the President was appointed to do it. Far be it from me to impugn the motives of the President. Death has taken him from us, and robbed his country of talents that bid fair to be an ornament to her councils.

We anticipate the dissolution of that compact, whose members have no tendency to accomplish the effect that is to be produced. Where self-interest is the propelling power, and this in opposition to the very name of the institution, we may for a while view a feeble effort to act contrary to the will, but a few experiments repel the attempt, and the institution sinks and is forgotten. So with this society.

The Board of Directors who were chosen for the first year were invited by a *parson* living near, to call on him and he would instruct them in the ways of Bible Societies, as he had had some experience in that line. They received his instructions. Being well drilled they only needed some incentive to commence their operations. This was not long wanting. A class of pious girls, who had been numbered in the revival accounts, had them in attendance. The

priests have an interest in societies, consequently are in favour of them; the girls were in favour of their priests and therefore attended to all they told them, most zealously; the Directors were in favour of the girls and as faithful servants did as they were desired. Thus they acted their parts, receiving the smiles of the fair as their reward. A circumstance occurred during the year, that has often since been mentioned by the society-men as very honorable to the Apprentices Bible Society. It was their being acknowledged by the American Bible Society, as Auxiliary: (who will not acknowledge his feeder a helper?) Yet, this matter of interest, on the part of this overgrown society, was thought a fit subject for an Address before the Apprentices Society at their last annual meeting. Upon it the speaker dwelt particularly, saying, "let this fact put to rest all arguments against Apprentices Bible Societies—that this has been acknowledged an Auxiliary by men of eminent piety," "let us be proud to say," &c.

So ended the first year. On an investigation of accounts it appeared from receipts in the hands of the Secretary, that the Treasurer had received nine dollars more than for which he would account. Therefore he was a defaulter.

At the second election, officers were chosen who differ widely from the old. They are mostly new members, admitted a short time before the election, and induced more by novelty, than any serious impressions of its utility, to become nominally attached to it. They may love popularity for this is inherent in human nature; but priestcraft does not blind the majority, nor the pious girls lead one of them. At no meeting since the election of the present officers have enough met to form a quorum. No money has been collected. The society that was started by causes that cease to exist, must therefore dwindle and be forgotten.

If there be any thing in the foregoing statement that is displeasing to those of an opposite turn of thinking, the writer rests his excuse on the facts that support it fully, believing that a candid exposure of facts offends none but those who, in theological theory, overlook that justice which ought to exist between man and man, and without which no one can be acceptable to that God who looketh upon the heart, and who will render unto every man according to his works. B.

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For the Reformer.

ACT OF THE OHIO LEGISLATURE.

From undoubted authority, I am informed that an act has been passed, and is now in force, in the state of Ohio, prohibiting married persons from becoming members of a society known by the name of Shakers.*

The existence of such an act, is said to have been repeatedly authenticated by its unprecedented influence on certain respectable individuals, who have attached themselves to that community.

* Perhaps the law will not exactly bear this construction. One section of the bill however thus reads:

"And be it further enacted, That if any person shall entice or persuade any married man or woman to join any sect or denomination of persons whatever whose principles and practice inculcate a renunciation of the matrimonial contract—shall on conviction thereof be fined in any sum not exceeding five hundred dollars at the discretion of the court having by law jurisdiction, and that all fines incurred under this section shall be paid into the treasury of the proper county for the use of the same."

This act was to take effect and be in force from the passage thereof, Jan. 11, 1811. At this time Edward Tiffin, a Methodist minister, was speaker of the House of Representatives, and Thomas Kirker, a Presbyterian Elder, speaker of the Senate. We are also informed that the "Rev." D. Purviance, a member of the House, (whose congregation had been much disturbed by the Shakers) was the principal agent in preparing, presenting, and supporting the bill.—*Ed.*

Now considering the many circumstances that have been presented to the public as the effects of clerical influence or ecclesiastical domination, it may not be improper to exhibit this singular law as furnishing at least some ground of suspicion that there is something more than wind in the reiterated alarm, indicating that our civil and religious liberties are in danger.

If it belongs to statesmen to dictate what religious community we shall not join, they must equally possess authority to dictate what sect we shall join: for it is a poor rule that will not work both ways. But is it indeed the business of a civil legislature to dictate what religious sect we shall join or not join? By no means. It is a subject in which, as civil officers, they are not at all interested. But it is well known to be a matter of the highest interest to the clergy, to establish or dissolve religious communities at their good will and pleasure. Then if such an act does exist as claims dominion over the consciences of men; and if none but the pretended vicegerents of God ever did or could assume the authority of imposing such an act, it must be inferred that this act is a monument of clerical influence, and that this class of men still continue the struggle for the reins of government and the establishment of a religious test.

It is a matter of but little consequence on what particular object the virtue or force of a principle be tried; the grand object is to have the principle admitted as correct. The right of the clergy to a seat in civil departments is not disputed, and if their right of enacting unconstitutional laws be also admitted, we are at once under European government, and may cast our crown of rejoicing at the feet of an unholy alliance of domineering bishops.

Few perhaps are apprized of any danger from the passage of a law that can affect but one small community; but let the right of enacting and enforcing such laws be granted, and let such acts acquire sufficient age and energy to

serve as a precedent in similar cases, and where is the authority over conscience to terminate, or what society can repose with safety on their claim of independence while there is another more influential in swaying the civil authorities into conformity to their plans?

A snake in the grass is harmless while the traveller is on the beaten road, but let the traveller have occasion to turn out of the old path and he meets the viper to his cost. While men are satisfied with their old systems and plans of religion they can be but little affected with any, the most oppressive, act against heretical opinions or new modes of worship; but from the spirit of revolution which for more than half a century hath been rapidly progressing, we cannot assure ourselves that our old traditions will very long afford their usual ease and comfort to the traveller; many have already found their way shut up, and have been obliged to turn out in every direction to find a travel more consistent with their convictions of conscience; and for my part I wish all my fellow creatures to enjoy the liberty of quitting the old and seeking a better according to their own conviction of right and wrong. I cannot acquiesce in offering any violence to any soul who will give the least evidence of his regard to the will of God in whatever may be his choice.

The Shakers it is true have run into many things that appear absurd, according to our apprehensions; but who can certainly know, that things new and strange will terminate with that people? New associations are frequently rising up in different parts of the land, which may in their progress adopt tenets and modes of worship as deserving of coercive restraint, in the esteem of the priesthood, as those of the Shakers, while in the view of civil policy they are deemed perfectly inoffensive. I would therefore suggest the necessity of keeping a sharp eye on the old crocodile, and suffer no law to exist, undisturbed, that under any pretext will

interfere with the rights of conscience in matters that exist merely between a man and his Maker: and if such acts of assembly as are founded on popular petitions, excited by clerical influence, have ever been found the first steps towards an invasion of human rights and liberties, would it not be wisdom, on the slightest alarm, to search the grass on every side, and if the snake be there concealed, rouse him from his hidden coil, stretch him out to his full length, shew what he really is, and give him his doom in due season, lest peradventure we or our posterity may have to pass that way when his age and venom may have rendered him much more formidable.

A New England Reformed Baptist.

[From the *American Eagle*.]

It was the great and good Sir William Blackstone, who remarked that if the clergy of England had not been restrained by Parliament in obtaining money and lands by charities and death bed devises, they would by his time have owned every foot of land in England. He then goes on to shew by what efforts the Parliament, ever since the time of the first Edward, in the 12th century, had endeavoured to restrain them, and by what devices and adroitness the Clergy had avoided those restraining statutes.

And it has been often supposed, that the time of Edward the First, near the dark ages, was the first time that laws were obliged to be passed to restrain them;—but it is far otherwise. It was as early as the fourth century, before the last of the apostles had been dead 300 years, that Valentinian, a Christian Emperor of the Roman Empire, had to pass edicts to protect the citizens from their avarice and rapacity—to pass an edict against their visiting the houses of *widows* and *maidens*, and disinheriting lawful heirs of their property. This was in the year of our Lord 370. The following is an account of it from authentic history.

“The strict regulations which have been framed by the wisdom of modern legislators to restrain the wealth and avarice of the clergy, may be originally deduced from the example of the emperor Valentinian. His edict addressed to Damasus, bishop of Rome, was publicly read in the churches of the city. He admonished the ecclesiastics and monks not to frequent the houses of widows and virgins; and menaced their disobedience with the animadversions of the civil judge. The director was no longer permitted to receive any gift, or legacy, or inheritance, from the liberality of his spiritual daughter: every testament contrary to this edict was declared null and void; and the illegal donation was confiscated for the use of the treasury. By a subsequent regulation, it should seem, that the same provisions were extended to nuns and bishops; and that all persons of the ecclesiastical order were rendered incapable of receiving any testamentary gifts, and strictly confined to the natural and legal rights of inheritance. As the guardian of domestic happiness and virtue, Valentinian applied this severe remedy to the growing evil. In the capital of the empire, the females of noble and opulent houses possessed a very ample share of independent property; and many of those devout females had embraced the doctrines of Christianity, not only with the cold assent of the understanding, but with the warmth of affection, and perhaps with the eagerness of fashion. They sacrificed the pleasures of dress and luxury; and renounced, for the praise of chastity, the soft endearments of conjugal society. Some ecclesiastic, of real or apparent sanctity, was chosen to direct their timorous conscience, and to amuse the vacant tenderness of the heart: and the unbounded confidence which they hastily bestowed, was often abused by knaves and enthusiasts; who hastened from the extremities of the East, to enjoy, on a splendid theatre, the privileges of the monastic profession. By their con-

tempt of the world, they insensibly acquired its most desirable advantages; the lively attachment, perhaps of a young and beautiful woman, the delicate plenty of an opulent household, and the respectful homage of the slaves, the freedmen, and the clients of a senatorial family. The immense fortunes of the Roman ladies were gradually consumed in lavish alms and expensive pilgrimages: and the artful monk, who had assigned himself the first, or possibly the sole place, in the testament of his spiritual daughter, still presumed to declare, with the smooth face of hypocrisy, that *he* was only the instrument of charity, and the steward of the poor. The lucrative, but disgraceful trade which was exercised by the clergy to defraud the expectations of the natural heirs, had provoked the indignation of a superstitious age: and two of the most respectable of the Latin fathers very honestly confess, that the ignominious edict of Valentinian was just and necessary; and that the Christian priests had deserved to lose a privilege, which was still enjoyed by comedians, charioteers, and the ministers of idols."

So it is seen, that in the quite early ages of Christianity—in the middle and dark ages, and in the latter and enlightened ages, *ecclesiastics* (at least a portion of them) have, in each of these ages, shown the same all-grasping propensity to get money and lands under their control; and have always obtained it under the pretence of religious charities, to get not only the widow's *mite*, but the widow's *dower*;—not only all the loose coppers of the child, but the inheritance of the heir and heiress.

It was necessary, it seems, in the early ages of Christianity, to restrain them by law—necessary, in the middle and dark ages, to restrain them by law. And judge, whether it will not be necessary, in these latter and enlightened ages, to restrain them, if you do not wish for yourselves or your children to be restrained in the enjoyment of their

civil and religious liberties. A proposal for a National religion and a National costume for the clergy, you see, is already in secret circulation.

Extract of a letter from a correspondent in the State of New-York, dated July 20, 1825.

"When on board the Steam Boat, from New York to Albany, I supposed I cast my eye on a man I had before seen, till at last, I was impressed with the idea of its being *Luther Rice*, and for a confirmation of it went to the captain's book, when I found my conjecture well founded. He is much altered within a few years, and shews the ravages of care and age in his looks. Some time after he approached me very complaisantly with a small volume which he desired me to read. The few first pages contained a description of the origin and plan of the Columbian College, at Washington, and the debt with which it is now encumbered, while it made a forcible appeal to all friends to this institution and to literature, to contribute to its relief. Most of the pages of this book were filled with blank leaves for subscribers. It seems he had been crafty enough to get the names of those most devoted to his views put down first, with large sums annexed to them, which I observed diminished as I advanced in reading. I returned him the book, and let him know I had no money to spare. I thought seriously of commencing an attack on him in presence of the passengers, on account of the disgust I felt at his servility and officiousness. He is not to be foiled in his labours, and was most indefatigable in presenting his book to most of the respectable passengers, who I saw hand to him considerable sums of money. You can hardly imagine the inquietude he expressed by his looks and walk while the passengers were reading his book; at the same time, I assure you, I could hardly refrain from using some pointed language towards him at seeing his avarice and sycophancy."

[From the Oriental Herald.]

Attempts to convert the Natives of the East to Christianity.

Thirty years have already elapsed since Protestant Missionaries have been numerous throughout India. During that interval, they have circulated in the country upwards of a million of Bibles; and after thirty years of uninterrupted labour, they reckon, according to the acknowledgment of their own advocate, only 1000 proselytes! And even these are mere abortions, the greater part of which perish by apostacy. About two years before my departure from India, the Protestant Missionaries of Serampore found themselves under the necessity of discharging from their service all their new converts, whom they had employed in their printing-house. These new Christians, having lost their caste by embracing Christianity, and finding themselves destitute, presented a memorial to Dr. Middleton, the Bishop of Calcutta, explaining to him, that when the Missionaries induced them to become Christians, they had promised to supply them with the means of existence.—The Missionaries alleged, in their justification, that they had been compelled to act in this manner, because these wretches, after their conversion to Christianity, had become so *vicious*, and especially so intemperate, that they feared lest the sight of the daily and scandalous excesses committed by them should pervert the whole of their Pagan workmen.

[From the Religious Messenger.]

There is, in the State of New York, a denomination called the Methodist Society. They are separates from the Methodist Episcopal Church. Its doctrines are the same as those of that Church, but its principles of church government are different, being that of a *representative form*, in which the people have a representation in legislation, and a voice in the election of their ministers, class leaders, and other offi-

cers, &c. similar in almost every respect to the Congregational Church. The ministry consists of those who are stationary and have a pastoral charge, and itinerants or missionaries. There are now organized in the United States, on the same doctrines and principles of government, five conferences, consisting of about 100 ministers, and nearly 3000 members, and are rapidly increasing.

[The Methodists here alluded to are supposed to be those who reside principally in the northern parts of the State of New York, and who have sometimes been called "Reformed Methodists."]

STATE OF THE RELIGIOUS WORLD.

"They are ALL gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable."

Romans iii. 12.

The above declaration may, perhaps, be as fitly applied to the religious orders and societies of the present day, as to those of whom it was first spoken. For, notwithstanding the great outward display of zeal for promoting Christianity, the number of meeting-houses and priests, the multiplication of sects and increase of professors, where can a community or body of individuals be found walking conformably to the requirements of the New Testament, and advancing the cause of that *pure and undefiled religion* so clearly inculcated by Christ and his apostles? There are many who suppose there is an abundance of this true religion now in the world—but it only furnishes an evidence that they are strangers to it themselves, and have never felt the operations of it in their own minds. We shall be at no loss to find the formalist and fanatic—the cold lifeless professor and the flaming zealot—the worldly-minded saint and the hypocrite, all pretending to religion, but alike destitute of every quality which constitutes true religion.

There are certain essential requisites to a christian which nothing can make up for the absence of, and without the possession of which we have no right to the christian name. These may be pointed out in a few words; and every one who wishes neither to deceive himself nor deceive others ought to prescribe them to himself, and under all circumstances inviolably and constantly to adhere to them. To these we now refer, viz. Doing unto another as we would have another do un-

to us. Seeking not merely our own welfare and advantage, but the welfare and advantage of others. Having a low and humble opinion of ourselves, and neither seeking nor desiring to be thought great in point of talents or religious attainments. (To wish to be thought great in respect to riches or ancestry is a principle too reduced here to be taken into consideration.) To be always faithful to our engagements, to deceive no one, and never to borrow of any or contract a debt without a clear prospect of paying, and by the time promised. To have a constant aim always to do right, and as we shall wish we had done when we come to die. These requirements are comprised in few words, but they are all important, and essential to every one who would justly claim the christian name.

A great deal is said in this day about the right faith, orthodoxy, &c. but a truly upright line of conduct is the true faith (as plainly appears from Scripture) and the only orthodoxy that is worth contending for. Every other kind of orthodoxy will fail a man, and become useless to him—but this will stand by him and support him in this life, and follow him to another world. See *Rev. xiv. 13*. Until mankind come to see this, and act in accordance with its truth, nothing but jargon, division, and strife, will be witnessed among men. It seems, indeed, from what is now passing in christendom, that we live at a time when mankind have lost sight of the main thing and give heed to fables, and that the devil has come down with great wrath and power, knowing that his time to reign and deceive the nations is very short. May the Lord hasten the time when men will awake to a true sense of what is right and practice it, and leave all inferior considerations, and all turmoil, contention, and strife, respecting the lesser matters of religion.

But it may be asked, shall not even the "*wrath of man praise him; and the remainder be restrained.*" Undoubtedly in the sense meant by the inspired penman. And all that is now going on in the religious world, will probably have its use. Many doctrines, sentiments and practices, are to be exploded and brought to nought; and sects and parties, in the madness of their zeal and contentions, will be left to disgrace themselves and accomplish their own dissolution. For the Lord will *once more shake not the earth only, but also heaven*, (or visible churches) *in order that the things shaken may be removed, and those things which cannot be shaken may remain.*

But in this great and trying, but important and necessary, work of shaking and overturning, it becomes every one to watch and guard his own heart, and keep on the garments of holiness, righteousness, and true charity; or else, like a house resting on the sand, he will not be able to stand the trials of this day, and will lose all the benefits which others will derive from the glorious and purifying work.

LETTER OF JOHN LOCKE.

About two months before his death, the celebrated John Locke wrote a letter (of which the following is a copy) to Anthony Collins, and left this direction upon it: *To be delivered after my decease.*

"I know you loved me living, and will preserve my memory when I am dead.—All the use to be made of it is, that this life is a scene of vanity, which soon passes away, and affords no solid satisfaction, but in the consciousness of doing well, and in the hope of another life. This is what I can say upon experience; and what you will find to be true, when you come to make up the account. Adieu! I leave my best wishes with you. JOHN LOCKE."

NEW SECT.

A new sect of Christians, called Sabbatans, has lately arisen, and made many converts in Lancashire, [England.] They insist upon respecting the seventh day, or the Sabbath, of the creation, and the fourth commandment, as imperative on the human race, and particularly on true believers in the sacred scriptures; and as such they assert that there exists no authority either in the Old or New Testament for changing the Sabbath from Saturday, the seventh day, to Sunday, the first day of the week;—because Christ came to fulfil the commandments, and not to break them. This sect is already so numerous in one district, that much inconvenience was lately felt on a market-day, kept on the Saturday, or seventh day, from the number of persons who refused to open their shops or pursue their usual occupations.—*Manchester paper.*

[*Advertisement in a late London paper.*]

"*To Clergymen, &c.*—The advertiser being anxious to employ a few hours of his time in supplying *manuscript sermons* to such Clergymen as may be pleased to favour him with their commands, begs likewise to state, that he has peculiar advantages in having a ready reference to all theological works."

[From late papers.]

SOUTH AMERICA.

The "Dictator" of Paraguay, Don Gaspar Francia, has suppressed all the Convents or Houses of Religious Orders, which existed within the territories of the Republic, at the date of the decree. The fifth article of that document requires an exact inventory to be made of all the property belonging to them, and appropriates the whole to the State.

[This country was formerly wholly under the control of the Jesuits, and very little comparatively was known respecting it, as strangers were not suffered to enter, nor the inhabitants to leave its jurisdiction. The Convents or Houses of Religious Orders were suppressed in the decree, on the ground of their being "neither necessary nor useful."]

The Executive of Buenos Ayres has transmitted to the House of Representatives of that Republic the plan of a law, declaring that the right, which every man has, to worship the Divinity agreeably to his own conscience, is inviolable in the territory of the Republic. This broad and sound principle of religious toleration reflects the highest credit upon the government of our sister Republic, and furnishes a fresh proof of the happy and liberalizing influence of the republican system upon the human mind.

[From the New York Telescope.]

ENGLAND AND THE HOLY ALLIANCE.—A pamphlet has lately made its appearance at Paris, called "The rights of Spain over her Colonies," which contains a furious attack upon England, for having recognized the Independence of the Colonies of South America. It enumerates, what it terms, the various usurpations of Great Britain, and insists that public justice demands a restitution of them. After an examination of the political and moral condition of England, the writer affirms, that the words "civil and religious liberty," which the English are so fond of using, mean nothing more than forgetfulness of God, and contempt for kings. He says, that England is destroyed by physical and moral rottenness—that it is faithless, exhausted, tottering under the weight of its debt, and on the brink of ruin; and he entreats the Sovereigns of Europe, for their own safety, to declare war against the English, and to renew against them the continental blockade, which he conceives would be exceedingly easy by means of the Holy Alliance!

MISSIONS IN THE RUSSIAN EMPIRE.

Extract of a letter from St. Petersburg.

The Scotch Missionaries, who some years ago obtained the Emperor's permission to establish themselves in the Crimea, in the provinces of the Caucasus, the government of Astracan and Georgia, for the purpose of undertaking the conversion of the numerous tribes attached to Paganism, which inhabit those countries, have renounced their projects. All those missions have discontinued their apostolical labours; and their chief, the celebrated missionary, Caruthers, has already passed through this capital to embark at Cronstadt, and return to Scotland."

A late account states that the Emperor of Russia has forbidden the labors of these Missionaries, and that it is in consequence of this prohibition that they have left their stations to return to their own country.

The amounts of receipts of fifteen benevolent Societies which held their anniversaries in London in May, was 1,150,000 dollars. The income of some of the principal Societies was as follows:

Church Missionary Society, \$180,125. Wesleyan Missionary Society, \$172,000. British and Foreign Bible Society, \$414,186. Jews Society, \$60,895. London Missionary Society, \$171,903. Religious Tract Society, \$55,805. Hibernian Society, \$36,155.

A correspondent of the *Western Recorder*, in a letter dated Rochester, (N.Y.) July 20th, says—"This morning, an association is formed to supply all the destitute places in Monroe county, with a stated ministry. *It will be done.*" The ministers are no doubt intended to be of a particular stamp, well calculated to bring about a *homogeneous influence*, and in consonance with Lyman Beecher's calculation, to be in the proportion of one for every 100 inhabitants.

It is said that in London there are 18 Sunday newspapers, circulating annually 16,254,534 sheets.

A Post-office has been established at Passumpsie River, Barnet, Vt. Ira Davis, Post-Master.

The Reformer is printed on the first of each month, at one dollar a year. Letters to be addressed and payment made, to T. R. GATES, Proprietor and principal Editor, No. 290, North Third Street, Philadelphia. Numbers can be supplied from the commencement of the work.